

REMARKS

This is a response to the Non-Final Office Action mailed on August 8, 2007.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-11 and 18-23 have been amended. Claims 3-10 and 18-23 have been amended to better conform with proper U.S. patent practice. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-26 are currently pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 21-23.

Claim Rejections -- 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-20 and 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,894,542 to Sacristan ("Scristan"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Sacristan discloses a panty girdle having a pair of rear transverse panels 7. The girdle also includes a double-fabric strip 9 of reinforced-elastic cloth that has a portion covering the pubic region 4.

Sacristan fails to disclose a tightening portion that "runs from above the anal cleft, passing above the left and right buttocks, and *downwards along the outer sides of the left and right thighs* to the vicinities of the left and right greater trochanters" as in amended independent claim 1, tightening portions that "runs from the vicinity of one of the left and right greater trochanter *upwards along the outer thigh* to above one of the left and right buttock such as to point to above the anal cleft" as in amended independent claim 2, or a tightening portion that "runs from the vicinities of the left and right greater trochanters *upwards along the outer sides of the left and right*

thighs to above the left and right buttocks such as to point to above the anal cleft" as is claimed in amended independent claim 11. The strips 7 and 9 of Sacristan do not travel upwards along the outer side of the thigh and above the buttocks or from above the buttock downwards along the outer side of the thigh. Instead, elastic strips 7 and 9 travel upwards from the pubic region 4 at the front of a wearer, across the leg, and then downwards around to the buttocks area. Accordingly, Sacristan fails to disclose each and every element of independent claims 1, 2, and 11, and thus independent claims 1, 2, and 11 are not anticipated by Sacristan.

Claims 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, and 24 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, claims 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, and 25 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 2, and claims 14, 17, 20, 23, and 26 depend from independent claim 11, and thus these claims are allowable for at least this reason.

Further, Sacristan fails disclose forked strips wherein one fork runs above the buttocks to a point above the anal cleft and another fork runs from the greater trochanters upward. In contrast, claims 7 and 8 recite that "the tightening portion is forked upward to the front and the rear, and the rear forks run from the vicinities of the left and right greater trochanters to above the left and right buttocks such as to point to above the anal cleft, and the front forks run from the greater trochanters upward." Accordingly, Sacristan fails to disclose each and every element of claims 7 and 8, and therefore claims 7 and 8 are allowable for at least this additional reason.

CONCLUSION

Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated August 8, 2007 has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks. In view of the foregoing it is believed that claims 1-26 are in condition for allowance and it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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